

US007298441B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Yang et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 7,298,441 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Nov. 20, 2007**

(54) **LIQUID CRYSTAL DISPLAY DEVICE**

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
patent is extended or adjusted under 35
U.S.C. 154(b) by 257 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **11/136,342**

(22) Filed: **May 23, 2005**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2005/0275774 A1 Dec. 15, 2005

(30) **Foreign Application Priority Data**

Jun. 11, 2004 (TW) 93116829 A

(51) **Int. Cl.**
G02F 1/1335 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **349/114; 349/119**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** **349/114,**
349/119

See application file for complete search history.

(56) **References Cited**

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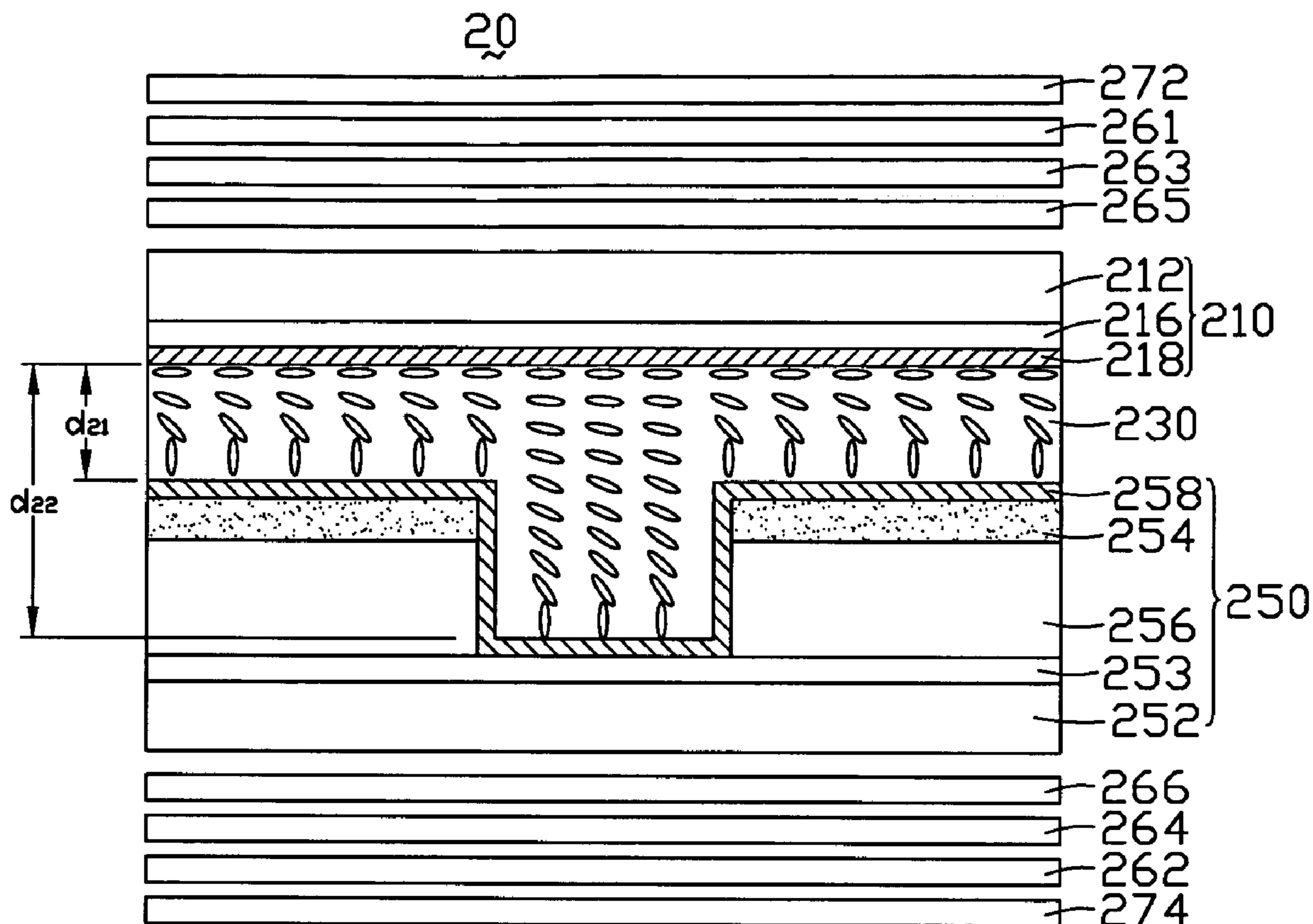
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An LCD device (20) includes a first substrate (210) and a second substrate (250), a liquid crystal layer (230) interposed between the substrates. Each pixel regions of the LCD device includes a reflection region and a transmission region. A pre-tilt angle of liquid crystal molecules adjacent to one of the substrates is in a range of 0° to 15°, and a pre-tilt angle of liquid crystal molecules adjacent to another substrate is in a range of 75° to 90°. This structure ensures the LCD device has a fast response time.

12 Claims, 3 Drawing Sheets



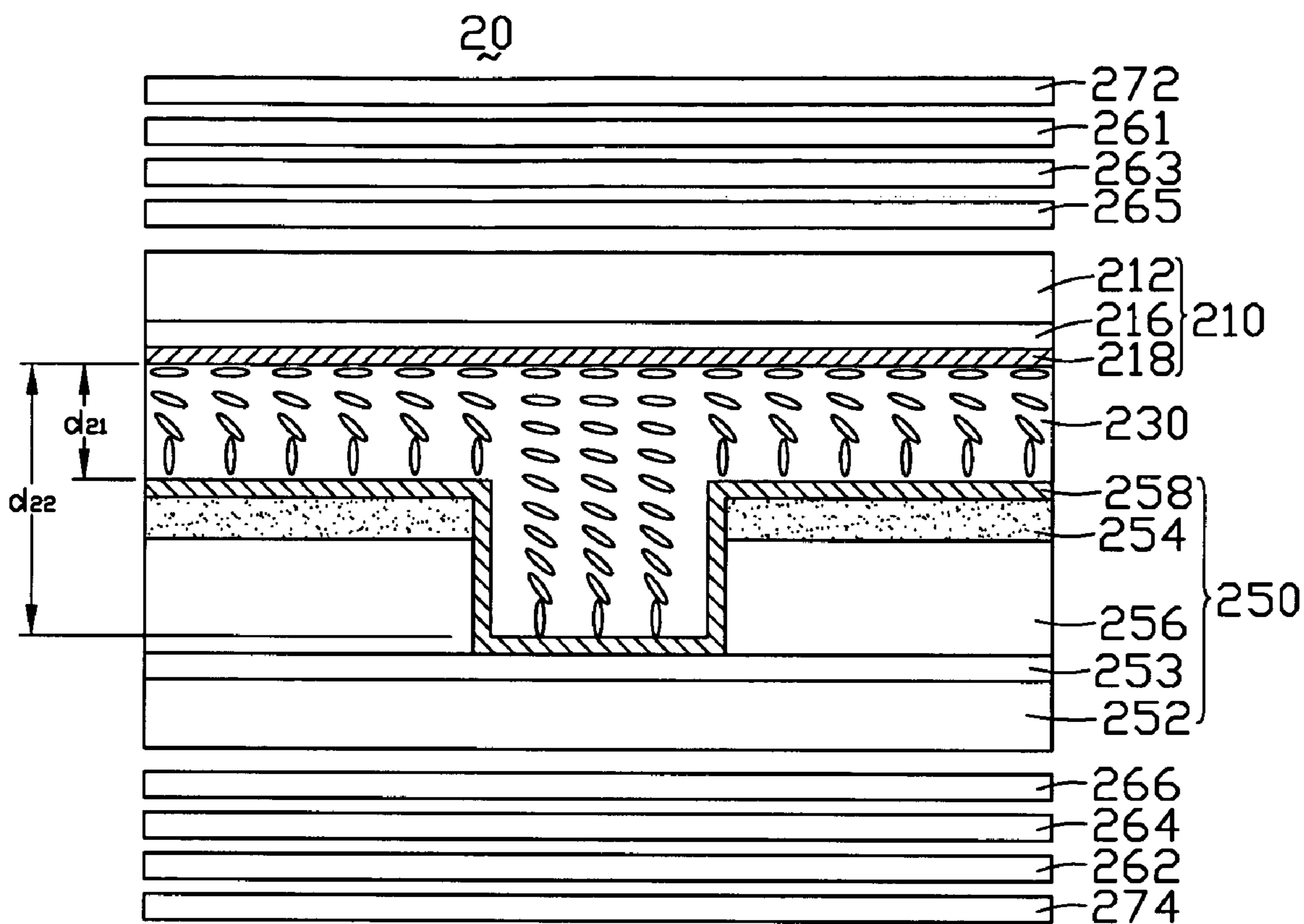


FIG. 1

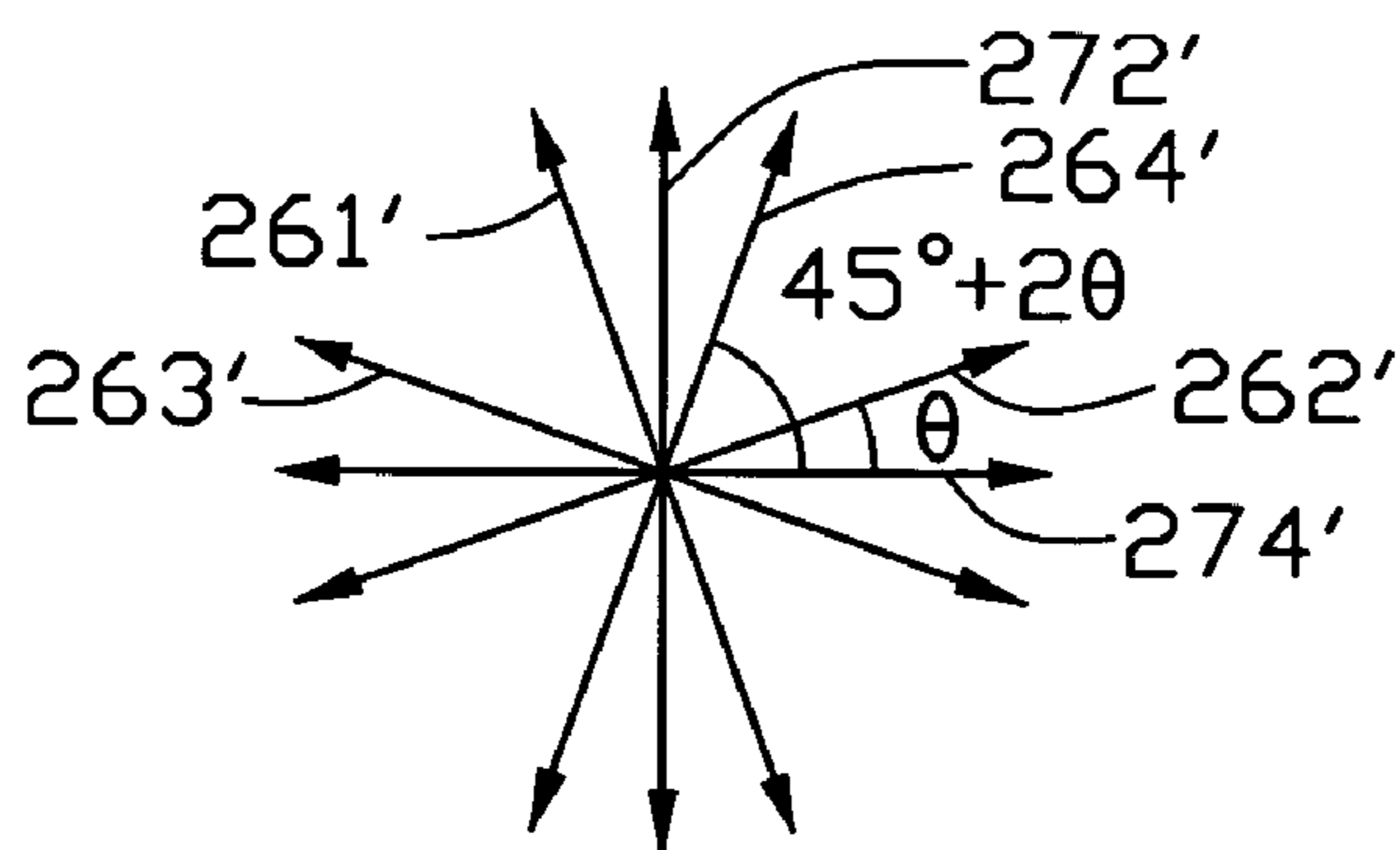


FIG. 2

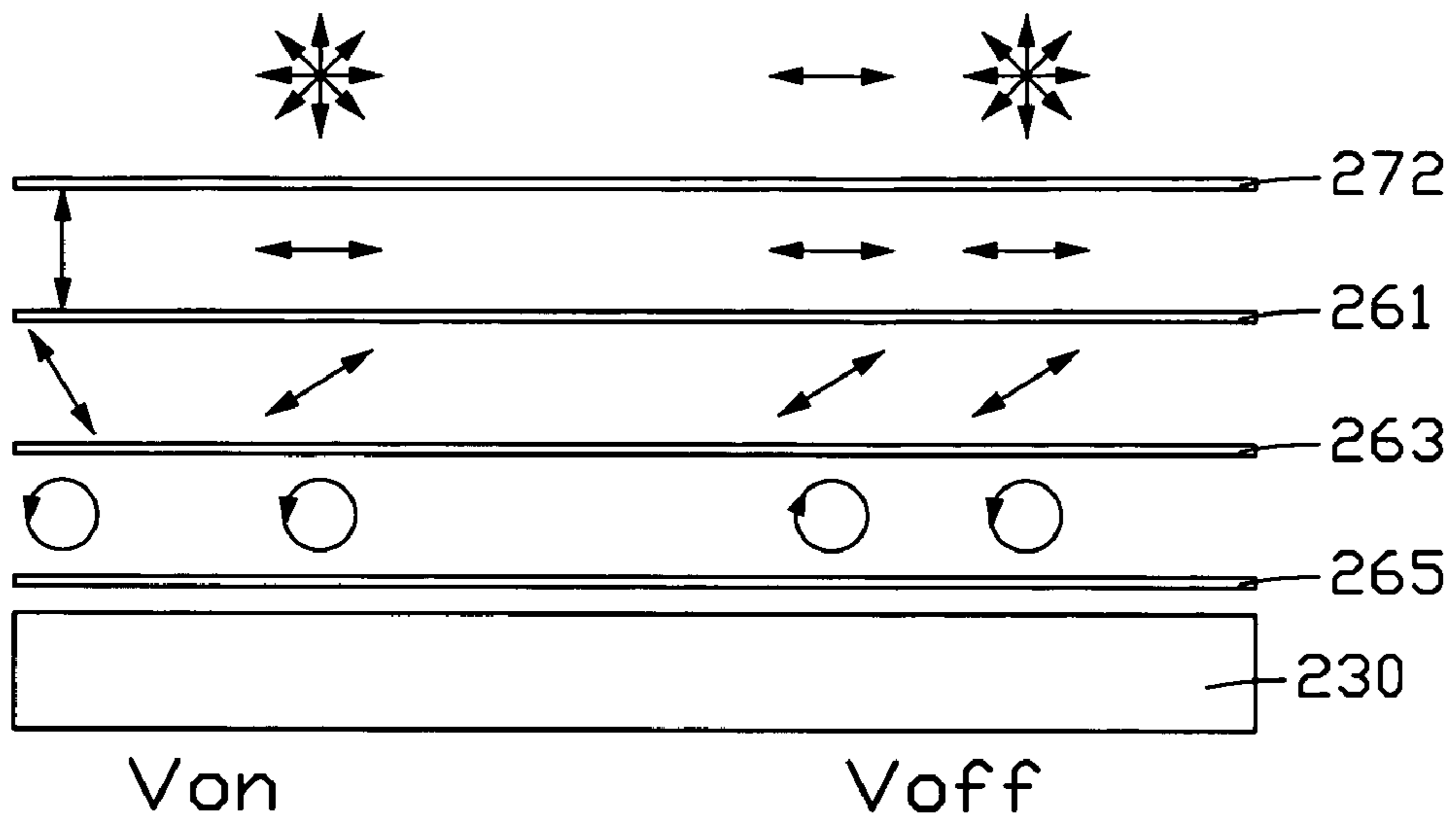


FIG. 3

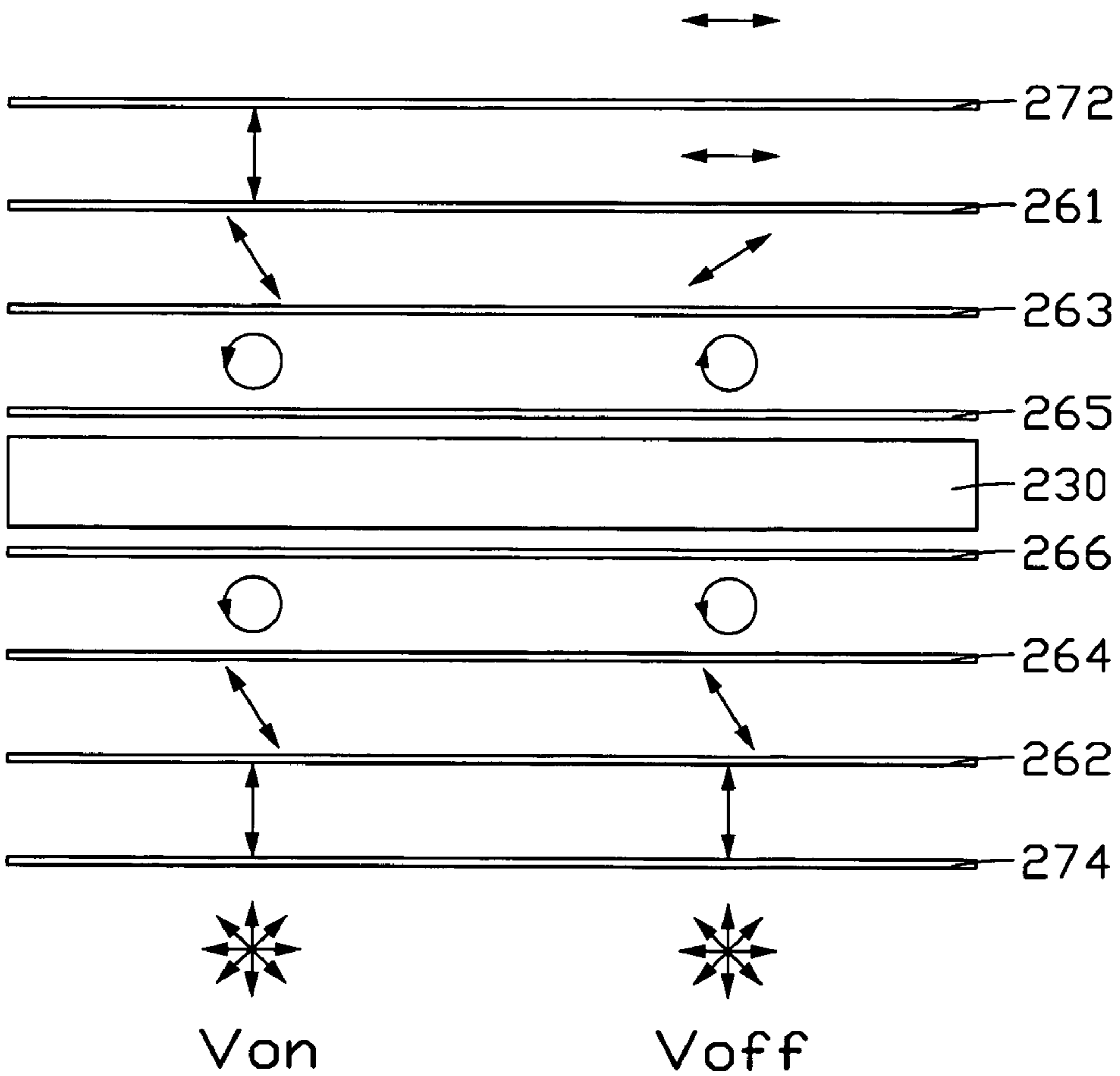


FIG. 4

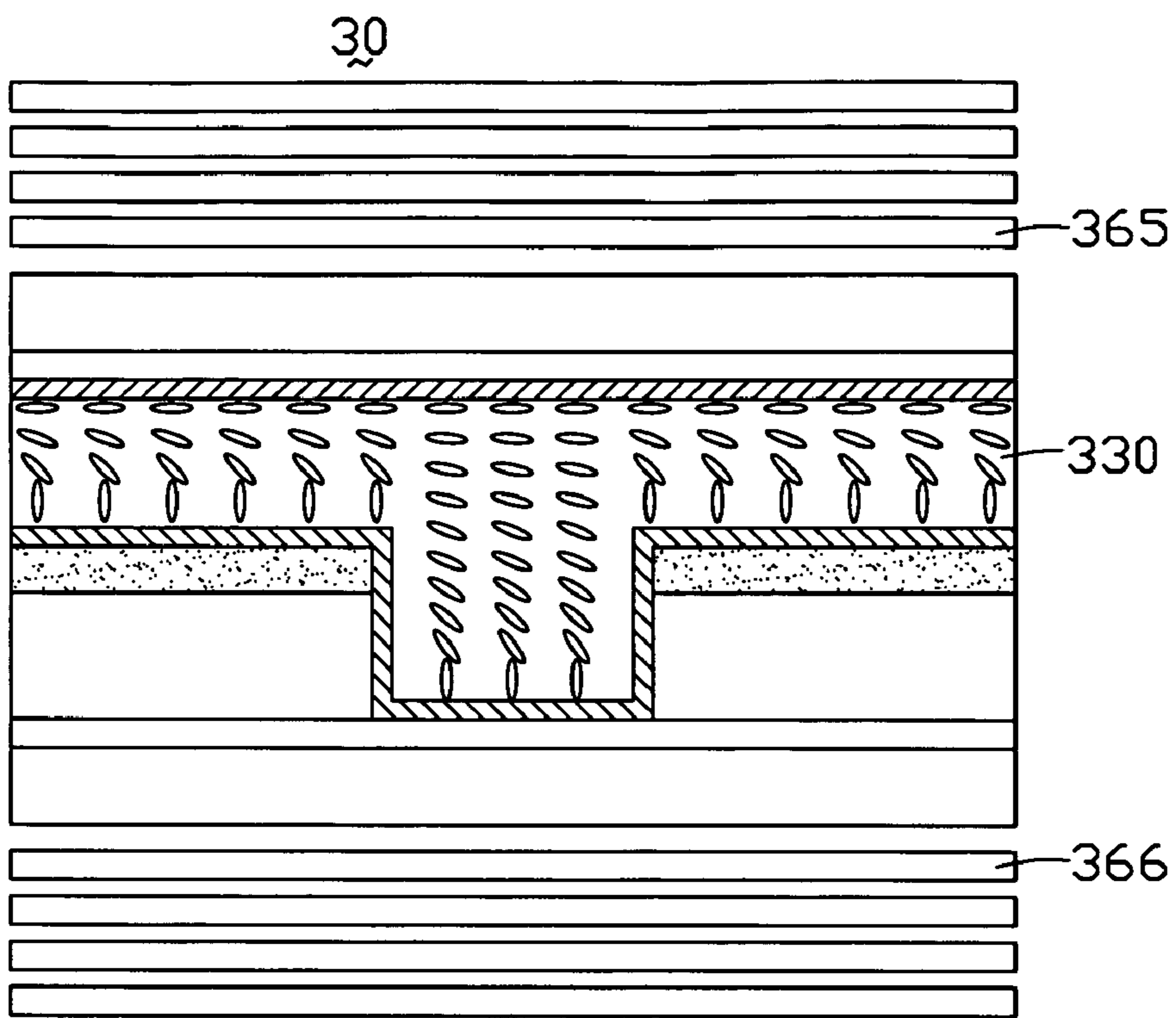


FIG. 5

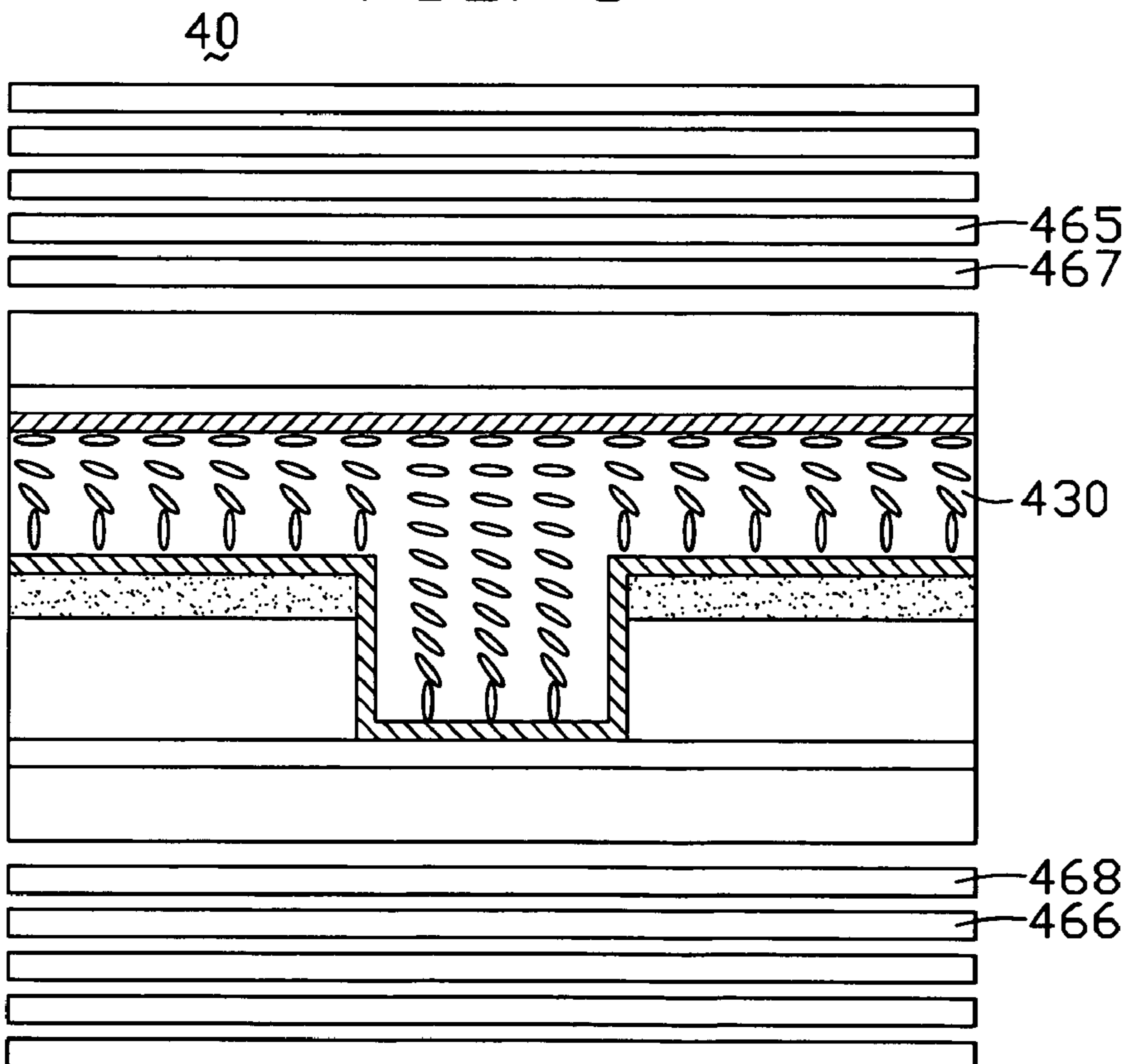


FIG. 6

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LIQUID CRYSTAL DISPLAY DEVICE**CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION**

This application is related to an application by CHIU-LIEN YANG and WEI-YI LING entitled LIQUID CRYSTAL DISPLAY DEVICE, filed on the same day as the present application and assigned to the same assignee as the present application.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to liquid crystal display (LCD) devices, and more particularly to a reflection/transmission type LCD device capable of providing a display both in a reflection mode and a transmission mode.

BACKGROUND

Conventionally, there have been three types of LCD devices commercially available: a reflection type LCD device utilizing ambient light, a transmission type LCD device utilizing backlight, and a semi-transmission type LCD device equipped with a half mirror and a backlight.

With a reflection type LCD device, a display becomes less visible in a dim environment. In contrast, with a transmission type LCD device, a display becomes hazy in strong ambient light (e.g., outdoor sunlight). Thus researchers sought to provide an LCD device capable of functioning in both modes so as to yield a satisfactory display in any environment. In due course, a semi-transmission type LCD device was disclosed in Japanese Laid-Open Publication No. 7-333598.

However, the above-mentioned conventional semi-transmission type LCD device has the following problems.

The conventional semi-transmission type LCD device uses a half mirror in place of a reflective plate used in a reflection type LCD device, and has a minute transmission region (e.g., minute holes in a metal thin film) in a reflection region, thereby providing a display by utilizing transmitted light as well as reflected light. Since reflected light and transmitted light used for a display pass through the same liquid crystal layer, an optical path of reflected light becomes twice as long as that of transmitted light. This causes a large difference in retardation of the liquid crystal layer with respect to reflected light and transmitted light. Thus, a satisfactory display cannot be obtained. Furthermore, a display in a reflection mode and a display in a transmission mode are superimposed on each other, so that the respective displays cannot be separately optimized. This results in difficulty in providing a color display, and tends to cause a blurred display.

SUMMARY

In a preferred embodiment, a liquid crystal display device includes a first and a second substrates, a liquid crystal layer having liquid crystal molecules interposed between the first and second substrates. A common electrode and an upper alignment film orderly dispose at an inner surface of the first substrate. A pixel electrode and a lower alignment film orderly dispose at an inner surface of the second substrate.

The liquid crystal display device includes a plurality of pixel regions. Each of the pixel regions defines a reflection region and a transmission region. The pixel electrode in each reflection regions cooperate with and/or are configured as

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reflection electrodes, and the pixel electrode in each transmission regions are configured as transmission electrodes. A thickness of the liquid crystal layer in the reflection regions is less than a thickness of the liquid crystal layer in the transmission regions. A pre-tilt angle of liquid crystal molecules adjacent to one of the substrates is in a range of 0° to 15° , and a pre-tilt angle of liquid crystal molecules adjacent to another substrate is in a range of 75° to 90° .

In each pixel region of the LCD device, the liquid crystal molecules adjacent to the two substrates have a pre-tilt angle in a range of 0° to 15° or 75° to 90° respectively, which ensures that the liquid crystal molecules can more easily twist when a voltage is applied thereto. Thereby, the LCD device **20** has a fast response time.

Other objects, advantages, and novel features will become more apparent from the following detailed description when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a schematic, exploded, side cross-sectional view of part of an LCD device according to a first embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a schematic, plan view of polarizing directions of polarizer and retardation films of the LCD device of FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 shows a polarized state of light in each of certain layers of the LCD device of FIG. 1, in respect of an on-state (white state) and an off-state (black state) of the LCD device, when the LCD device operates in a reflection mode.

FIG. 4 shows a polarized state of light in each of certain layers of the LCD device of FIG. 1, in respect of an on-state (white state) and off-state (black state) of the LCD device, when the LCD device operates in a transmission mode.

FIG. 5 is a schematic, exploded, side cross-sectional view of part of an LCD device according to a second embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 6 is a schematic, exploded, side cross-sectional view of part of an LCD device according to a third embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

FIG. 1 is a schematic, exploded, side cross-sectional view of part of an LCD device **20** according to a first embodiment of the present invention. The LCD device **20** includes a first substrate assembly **210**, a second substrate assembly **250** disposed parallel to and spaced apart from the first substrate assembly **210**, and a liquid crystal layer **230** having liquid crystal molecules (not labeled) sandwiched between the substrates **210** and **250**.

A first upper compensation film **265**, a first upper retardation film **263**, a second upper retardation film **261**, and an upper polarizer **272** are orderly disposed on an outer surface of the first substrate assembly **210**. A first lower compensation film **266**, a first lower retardation film **264**, a second lower retardation film **262**, and a lower polarizer **274** are orderly disposed on an outer surface of the second substrate assembly **250**.

The first substrate assembly **210** includes a transparent substrate **212**, a transparent common electrode **216**, and an upper alignment film **218**. The common electrode **216** and the upper alignment film **218** are orderly disposed on an inner surface of the first substrate assembly **210**.

The second substrate assembly **250** includes a transparent substrate **252**, a pixel electrode **253**, a plurality of reflection

electrodes **254**, a transparent insulating layer **256**, and a lower alignment film **258**. The pixel electrode **253** is disposed on an inner surface of the transparent substrate **252**. The pixel electrode **253** is made of a transparent conductive material, such as indium-tin-oxide (ITO) or indium-zinc-oxide (IZO). The transparent insulating layer **256** is disposed on the pixel electrode **253**, and generally comprises separated portions. A plurality of reflection electrodes **254** is disposed between the lower alignment film **258** and the portions of the transparent insulating layer **256**. The reflection electrodes **254** are made of metal with a high reflective ratio, such as Al or an Al—Nd alloy. The reflection electrodes **254** are used for reflecting ambient light when the LCD device **20** operates in a reflection mode. The lower alignment film **258** is attached on the pixel electrode **253** and the reflection electrodes **254**.

The alignment films **218** and **258** are used to ensure that the liquid crystal molecules maintain a pre-tilt angle. The pre-tilt angle of the liquid crystal molecules adjacent to the inner surface of the first substrate assembly **210** is in a range of 0° to 15° , and the pre-tilt angle of the liquid crystal molecules adjacent to the inner surface of the second substrate assembly **250** is in a range of 75° to 90° .

The LCD device **20** includes a plurality of pixel regions that span through the common electrode **216**, the pixel electrode **253**, and liquid crystal layer **230** contained between the common and pixel electrodes **216**, **253**. Each of the pixel regions includes a reflection region (not labeled) corresponding to the reflection electrodes **254** on the portions of the transparent insulating layers **256**, and a transmission region (not labeled) corresponding to gaps between the portions of the transparent insulating layer **256**. The liquid crystal layer **230** has a thickness d_{21} in the reflection region, and has a thickness d_{22} in the transmission region. d_{22} is larger than d_{21} . In this embodiment, d_{21} is substantially half of d_{22} .

The first upper and lower compensation films **265** and **266** are discotic molecular films. The first upper and lower retardation films **263** and **264** are half-wave plates. The second upper and lower retardation films **261** and **262** are quarter-wave plates.

Also referring to FIG. **2**, the lower polarizer **274** has a horizontal polarizing axis **274'**, and the upper polarizer **272** has a polarizing axis **272'** perpendicular to the polarizing axis **274'**. The second lower retardation film **262** has an optical axis **262'**, and the second upper retardation film **261** has an optical axis **261'** perpendicular to the optical axis **262'**. The optical axis **262'** maintains an angle θ relative to the polarizing axis **274'**. The angle θ is in a range of either 8° to 22° , or 68° to 82° . In this embodiment, θ is 10° . The first lower retardation film **264** has an optical axis **264'**, and the first upper retardation film **263** has an optical axis **263'** perpendicular to the optical axis **264'**. The optical axis **264'** maintains an angle of $20^\circ \pm 45^\circ$ relative to the polarizing axis **274'** of the second polarizer **274**.

The first upper and lower compensation films **265** and **266** are biaxial compensation films. A phase retardation relation of the first upper compensation film **265** and the liquid crystal layer **230** in the reflection regions is represented by the following formulae:

$$Ret_{LCR}(V_{Off}) - Ret_{LCR}(V_{On}) = \lambda/4 \pm m(\lambda/2), m=0, 1, 2, \dots$$

$$Ret_{LCR}(V_{On}) + Ret_{F265} = m(\lambda/2), m=0, 1, 2, \dots$$

where $Ret_{LCR}(V_{Off})$ is the phase retardation of the liquid crystal layer **230** in the reflection regions in an on-state of

the LCD device **20**, $Ret_{LCR}(V_{On})$ is the phase retardation of the liquid crystal layer **230** in the reflection regions in an off-state of the LCD device **20**, and Ret_{F265} is the phase retardation of the first upper compensation film **265**.

The phase retardations of the first upper and lower compensation films **265** and **266** and the liquid crystal layer **230** in the transmission regions are represented by the following formulae:

$$Ret_{LCT}(V_{Off}) - Ret_{LCT}(V_{On}) = \lambda/2 \pm m\lambda, m=0, 1, 2, \dots$$

$$Ret_{LCT}(V_{On}) + Ret_{F265} + Ret_{F266} = m\lambda, m=0, 1, 2, \dots$$

where $Ret_{LCT}(V_{Off})$ is the phase retardation of the liquid crystal layer **230** in the transmission regions in an on-state of the LCD device **20**, $Ret_{LCT}(V_{On})$ is the phase retardation of the liquid crystal layer **230** in the reflection regions in an off-state of the LCD device **20**, and Ret_{F265} and Ret_{F266} are the phase retardations of the first upper and lower compensation films **265** and **266** respectively. In this embodiment,

$$Ret_{LCR}(0V) - Ret_{LCR}(3.7V) = \lambda/4$$

$$Ret_{LCR}(3.7V) + Ret_{F265} = 0$$

$$Ret_{LCT}(0V) - Ret_{LCT}(3.7V) = \lambda/2$$

$$Ret_{LCT}(3.7V) + Ret_{F265} + Ret_{F266} = 0$$

FIG. **3** shows a polarized state of light in each of certain layers of the LCD device **20** when the LCD device **20** operates in a reflection mode. When no voltage is applied to the LCD device **20**, the LCD device **20** is in an on-state. Ambient incident light becomes linearly-polarized light having a polarizing direction **272'** after passing through the polarizer **272**. Then the linearly-polarized light passes through the second upper retardation film **261** (a half-wave plate). The polarized state of the linearly-polarized light is not changed, and the polarizing direction thereof twists by an amount of 2θ . Thereafter, the linear-polarized light is incident upon the first upper retardation film **263** (a quarter-wave plate), and becomes circularly-polarized light. Then the circularly-polarized light passes through the first upper compensation film **265** and is incident on the liquid crystal layer **230**. Since an effective phase difference of the liquid crystal layer **230** in an on-state is adjusted to a wavelength of $\lambda/4$ in order to obtain a white display, the incident circularly-polarized light becomes linearly-polarized light. The linearly-polarized light exiting the liquid crystal layer **230** is reflected by the reflection electrodes **254**. The linearly-polarized light keeps its polarized state, and is incident on the liquid crystal layer **230** again. The linearly-polarized light passing through the liquid crystal layer **230** becomes circularly-polarized light having a polarizing direction opposite to that of the circularly-polarized light originally incident on the liquid crystal layer **230**. The circularly-polarized light exiting the liquid crystal layer **230** is converted to linearly-polarized light by the quarter-wave plate **263**. Thereafter, the linearly-polarized light passes through the half-wave plate **261**, and is output through the polarizer **272** for displaying images.

On the other hand, when a voltage is applied to the LCD device **20**, the LCD device **20** is in an off-state. Up to the point where ambient incident light reaches the liquid crystal layer **230**, the ambient incident light undergoes transmission in substantially the same way as described above in relation to the LCD device **20** being in the on-state. Since an effective phase difference of the liquid crystal layer **230** is adjusted to be 0 by applying a voltage in order to obtain a

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black display, the circularly-polarized light incident on the liquid crystal layer **230** passes therethrough as circularly-polarized light. The circularly-polarized light exiting the liquid crystal layer **230** is reflected by the reflection electrodes **254**. The circularly-polarized light keeps its polarized state, and is incident on the liquid crystal layer **230** again. After passing through the the liquid crystal layer **230**, the circularly-polarized light is converted into linearly-polarized light by the first upper retardation film **263** (a quarter-wave plate). At this time, the polarizing direction of the linearly-polarized light is rotated by about 90° compared with that of a white display state. Then the linearly-polarized light passes through the second upper polarized film **261** (a half-wave plate), and is absorbed by the polarizer **272**. Thus the linearly-polarized light is not output from the LCD device **20** for displaying images.

FIG. **4** shows a polarized state of light in each of certain layers of the LCD device **20** for an on-state (white state) and an off-state (black state) when the LCD device **20** operates in a transmission mode. Incident light undergoes transmission in a manner similar to that described above in relation to the LCD device **20** operating in the reflection mode.

In each pixel region of the LCD device **20**, the liquid crystal molecules have a pre-tilt angle, which ensures that the liquid crystal molecules can more easily twist when a voltage is applied thereto. Thereby, the LCD device **20** has a fast response time. Moreover, the retardation films and compensation films are used for compensating for color, so as to ensure that the LCD device **20** has a good quality display.

FIG. **5** is a schematic, exploded, side cross-sectional view of part of an LCD device **30** according to a second embodiment of the present invention. The LCD device **30** has a structure similar to the LCD device **20**. However, the LCD device **30** includes first upper and lower compensation films **365** and **366**, which are single axis compensation films, such as A-plate compensation films, or discotic molecular films.

The phase retardation relation of the first upper compensation film **365** and the liquid crystal layer **330** in the reflection regions is represented by the following formulae:

$$Ret_{LCR}(V_{Off})=Ret_{LCR}(V_{On})=\lambda/4\pm m(\lambda/2), m=0, 1, 2, \dots$$

$$Ret_{LCR}(V_{On})+Ret_{F365}=\pm m(\lambda/2), m=0, 1, 2, \dots$$

where $Ret_{LCR}(V_{Off})$ is the phase retardation of the liquid crystal layer **330** in the reflection regions in an on-state, $Ret_{LCR}(V_{On})$ is the phase retardation of the liquid crystal layer **330** in the reflection regions in an off-state, and Ret_{F365} is the phase retardation of the first upper compensation film **365**.

The phase retardations of the first upper and lower compensation films **365** and **366** and the liquid crystal layer **330** in the transmission regions are represented by the following formulae:

$$Ret_{LCT}(V_{Off})-Ret_{LCT}(V_{On})=\lambda/2\pm m\lambda, m=0, 1, 2, \dots$$

$$Ret_{LCT}(V_{On})+Ret_{F365}+Ret_{F366}=\pm m\lambda, m=0, 1, 2, \dots$$

where $Ret_{LCT}(V_{Off})$ is the phase retardation of the liquid crystal layer **330** in the transmission regions in an on-state, $Ret_{LCT}(V_{On})$ is the phase retardation of the liquid crystal layer **330** in the reflection regions in an off-state, and Ret_{F365} and Ret_{F366} are the phase retardations of the first upper and lower compensation films **365** and **366** respectively. In this embodiment,

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$$Ret_{LCR}(0V)=Ret_{LCR}(4V)=\lambda/4$$

$$Ret_{LCR}(4V)+Ret_{F365}=0$$

$$Ret_{LCT}(0V)=Ret_{LCT}(4V)=\lambda/2$$

$$Ret_{LCT}(4V)+Ret_{F365}+Ret_{F366}=0$$

FIG. **6** is a schematic, exploded, side cross-sectional view of part of an LCD device **40** according to a third embodiment of the present invention. The LCD device **40** has a structure similar to the LCD device **30**. However, the LCD device **40** includes first upper and lower compensation films **465** and **466**, and second upper and lower compensation films **467** and **468**, which are single axis compensation films. The first upper and lower compensation films **465** and **466** are A-plate compensation films. The second upper and lower compensations films **467** and **468** are discotic molecular films.

The phase retardation relation of the first and second upper compensation films **465** and **467** and the liquid crystal layer **430** in the reflection regions is represented by the following formulae:

$$Ret_{LCR}(V_{Off})=Ret_{LCR}(V_{On})=\lambda/4\pm m(\lambda/2), m=0, 1, 2, \dots$$

$$Ret_{LCR}(V_{On})+Ret_{F465}+Ret_{F467}=m\lambda, m=0, 1, 2, \dots$$

where $Ret_{LCR}(V_{Off})$ is the phase retardation of the liquid crystal layer **430** in the reflection regions in an on-state, $Ret_{LCR}(V_{On})$ is the phase retardation of the liquid crystal layer **430** in the reflection regions in an off-state, and Ret_{F465} and Ret_{F467} are the phase retardations of the first and second upper compensation films **465** and **467**, respectively.

The phase retardations of the first upper and lower and the second upper and lower compensation films **465**, **466**, **467** and **468** and the liquid crystal layer **430** in the transmission regions are represented by the following formulae:

$$Ret_{LCT}(V_{Off})=Ret_{LCT}(V_{On})=\lambda/2\pm m\lambda, m=0, 1, 2, \dots$$

$$Ret_{LCT}(V_{On})+Ret_{F465}+Ret_{F466}+Ret_{F467}+Ret_{F468}=m\lambda, m=0, 1, 2, \dots$$

where $Ret_{LCT}(V_{Off})$ is the phase retardation of the liquid crystal layer **430** in the transmission regions in an on-state, $Ret_{LCT}(V_{On})$ is the phase retardation of the liquid crystal layer **430** in the reflection regions in an off-state, and Ret_{F465} , Ret_{F466} , Ret_{F467} and Ret_{F468} are the phase retardations of the first upper and lower, and second upper and lower compensation films **465**, **466**, **467** and **468** respectively. In this embodiment,

$$Ret_{LCR}(0V)=Ret_{LCR}(3V)=\lambda/4$$

$$Ret_{LCR}(3V)+Ret_{F465}+Ret_{F467}=0$$

$$Ret_{LCT}(0V)=Ret_{LCT}(3V)=\lambda/2$$

$$Ret_{LCT}(3V)+Ret_{F465}+Ret_{F466}+Ret_{F467}+Ret_{F468}=0$$

Various modifications and alterations are possible within the ambit of the invention herein. For example, the compensation films may be biaxial compensation films, single compensation films, A-plate compensation film or discotic molecular films. Moreover, the LCD device may only employ an upper retardation film, and a lower retardation film for compensating color. Furthermore, the LCD device may only employ a compensation film disposed on one of the substrates. In addition, any or all the retardation films

and compensation films may be disposed on inner surfaces of either of the substrates, adjacent to the liquid crystal layer.

It is to be understood, however, that even though numerous characteristics and advantages of the present embodiments have been set out in the foregoing description, together with details of the structures and functions of the embodiments, the disclosure is illustrative only, and changes may be made in detail, especially in matters of shape, size, and arrangement of parts within the principles of the invention to the full extent indicated by the broad general meaning of the terms in which the appended claims are expressed.

What is claimed is:

1. A liquid crystal display device, comprising:
 - a first substrate and a second substrate;
 - a liquid crystal layer having liquid crystal molecules interposed between the first and second substrates;
 - a first polarizer provided at the first substrate;
 - a first upper retardation film and a second upper retardation film disposed between the liquid crystal layer and the first polarizer, the first upper retardation film being a quarter-wave plate, the second upper retardation films being a half-wave plate;
 - a common electrode disposed at an inner surface of the first substrate;
 - a pixel electrode disposed at an inner surface of the second substrate;
 - a plurality of pixel regions, each of the pixel regions including a reflection region and a transmission region, wherein a thickness of the liquid crystal layer in the transmission region is greater than a thickness of the liquid crystal layer in the reflection region;
 - a second polarizer provided under the second substrate; and
 - a first lower retardation film and a second lower retardation film disposed between the liquid crystal layer and the second polarizer, the first lower retardation film being a quarter-wave plate, the second lower retardation films being a half-wave plate;
 wherein a pre-tilt angle of liquid crystal molecules adjacent to one of the substrates is in a range of 0° to 15° , and a pre-tilt angle of liquid crystal molecules adjacent to the other substrate is in a range of 75° to 90° ; the first polarizer has a polarizing axis perpendicular to a polarizing axis of the second polarizer, the first upper retardation film has an optical axis perpendicular to an optical axis of the first lower retardation film, the second upper retardation film has an optical axis perpendicular to an optical axis of the second lower retardation film, the optical axis of the second lower retardation film maintains an angle θ relative to the polarizing axis of the second polarizer, θ is in a range of 8° to 22° or in a range of 68° to 82° .

2. The liquid crystal display device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the optical axis of the first lower retardation film maintains an angle of $2\theta \pm 45^\circ$ relative to the polarizing axis of the second polarizer.

3. The liquid crystal display device as claimed in claim 2, further comprising a first upper compensation film disposed between the first upper retardation film and the liquid crystal layer.

4. The liquid crystal display device as claimed in claim 3, wherein the first upper compensation film is one of a discotic molecular film, a biaxial compensation film, a single axis compensation film, and an A-plate compensation film.

5. The liquid crystal display device as claimed in claim 2, further comprising a first lower compensation film disposed between the first tower retardation film and the liquid crystal layer.

6. The liquid crystal display device as claimed in claim 5, wherein the first lower compensation film is one of a discotic molecular film, a biaxial compensation film, a single axis compensation film, and an A-plate compensation film.

7. The liquid crystal display device as claimed in claim 2, further comprising a first upper compensation film disposed between the first upper retardation film and the liquid crystal display, and a first lower compensation film disposed between the first lower retardation film and the liquid crystal layer.

8. The liquid crystal display device as claimed in claim 7, wherein each of the first upper and lower compensation films is one of a discotic molecular film, a biaxial compensation film, a single axis compensation film, and an A-plate compensation film.

9. The liquid crystal display device as claimed in claim 7, further comprising a second upper compensation film disposed between the first upper compensation film and the liquid crystal layer.

10. The liquid crystal display device as claimed in claim 7, further comprising a second lower compensation film disposed between the first lower compensation film and the liquid crystal layer.

11. The liquid crystal display device as claimed in claim 7, further comprising a second upper compensation film disposed between the first upper compensation film and the liquid crystal layer, and a second lower compensation film disposed between the first lower compensation film and the liquid crystal layer.

12. The liquid crystal display device as claimed in claim 11, wherein each of the second upper and lower compensation films is one of a discotic molecular film, a biaxial compensation film, a single axis compensation film, and an A-plate compensation film.

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